

THE PHANTOM™

#25
MOONSTONE
\$5.99

Mike Bullock
Silvestre Szilagyi



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THE PHANTOM

created by LEE FALK

"CHECKMATE"
PART FIVE OF FIVE

WRITTEN BY MIKE BULLOCK

ILLUSTRATED BY SILVĚSTRE SZILÁGYI

COLORED BY BOB PEDROZA

LETTERED BY NATE PRIDE

EDITED BY JOE GENTILE

COVER BY DOUG KLAUBA

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PHANTOM CONSULTANT
ED RHOADES

AND TO **KAREN MOY** AT KING FEATURES

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THE BANGALAN
JUNGLE

PAK PAK PAK

WA-BOOM!

BRAP
BRAP BRAP

KRA-KOOM!



FALL
BACK!



PUSH THEM OUT
OF THE TOWN,
QUICKLY! I WANT
NO CIVILIANS
HARMED!





MAWITAAN.

GET OUT
OF OUR CITY,
VERMIN!

TRY TEAR
GAS, MEN!



THEY'LL NEVER
LET YOU HAVE
PEACE AS LONG
AS THEY LIVE, MY
BROTHERS!



WE'LL NEVER HAVE
PEACE AS LONG AS
THEY LIVE, BROTHERS!



WA-BOOF!



FIRE THIS
INTO THE BUILDING
NEXT TO THEM.
YOU'LL BURY THEM
ALIVE!



DIE!!

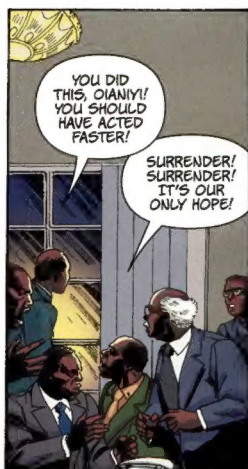
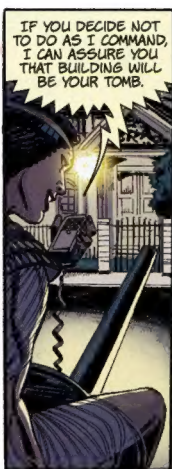
INSIDE THE LOCKE
CORPORATION'S
WAREHOUSE, INDUSTRIAL
DISTRICT, MAWITAAN.



OUTSIDE THE LOCKE
CORPORATION'S
WAREHOUSE,
INDUSTRIAL
DISTRICT, MAWITAAN.









THE EDGE
OF TOWN.

BRAP BRAP BRAP

POP POP POP
P-POP POP

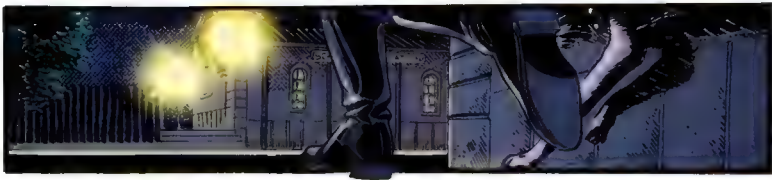
PUSH THEM OUT
OF THE CITY, MEN!
NO MATTER THE
COST!

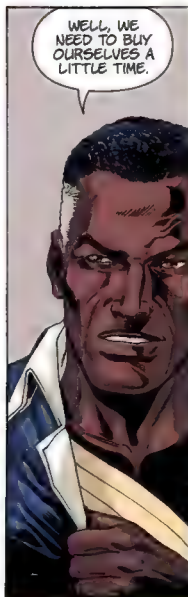
NO MATTER
THE COST!

FOR
LUAGA!

FOR
BANGALLA!







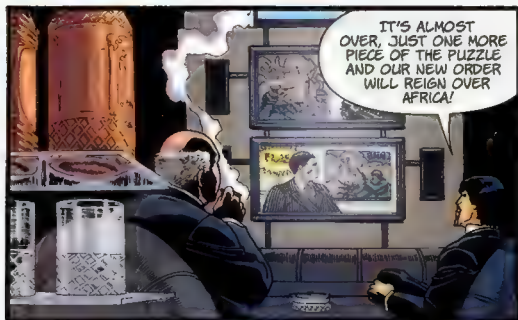


OR DIE!

I'VE COME TO
SEE YOU HANG
FOR YOUR CRIMES
AGAINST THE
PEOPLES OF
BANGALLA.

AND TAKE
MY PLACE AS
RIGHTFUL
RULER OF
THIS NATION!





IT'S ALMOST OVER, JUST ONE MORE PIECE OF THE PUZZLE AND OUR NEW ORDER WILL REIGN OVER AFRICA!



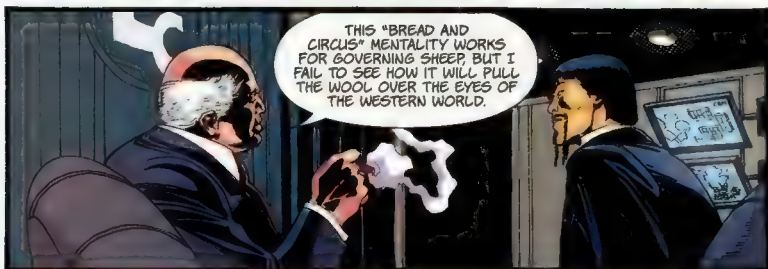
I'VE JUST RECEIVED WORD THAT THE UNITED STATES, ENGLAND AND AUSTRALIA ARE CONSIDERING SENDING A MULTINATIONAL PEACEKEEPING FORCE TO THE REGION.



THIS IS GETTING FAR TOO MESSY AND CONSPICUOUS.



QUITE THE CONTRARY, MY FRIEND, THE GREATER THE DISTRACTION, THE FASTER THE DIAMONDS FLOW.

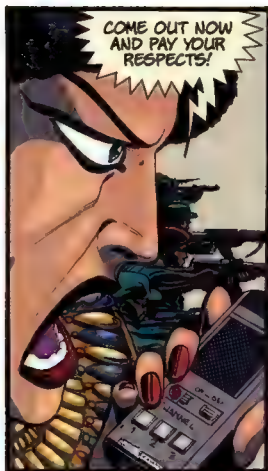


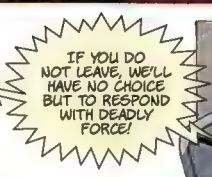
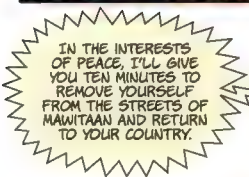
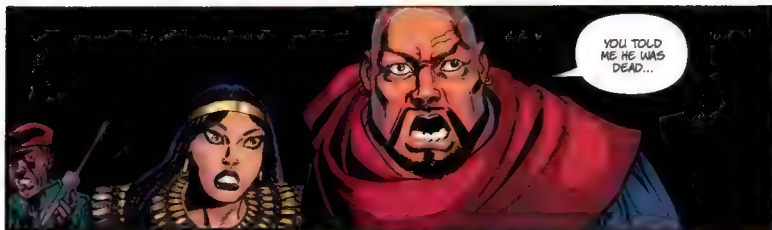
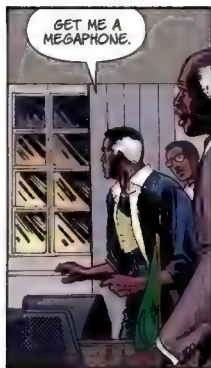
THIS "BREAD AND CIRCUS" MENTALITY WORKS FOR GOVERNING SHEEP, BUT I FAIL TO SEE HOW IT WILL PULL THE WOOL OVER THE EYES OF THE WESTERN WORLD.

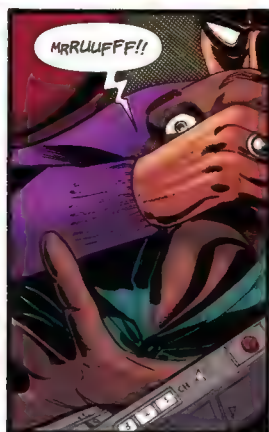
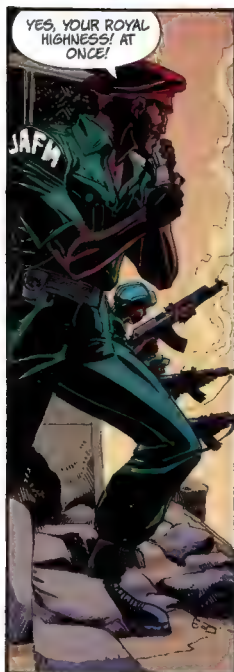


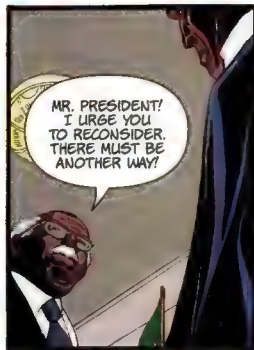
HOW FAST YOU FORGET. THE WESTERNERS DON'T CARE ABOUT AFRICA. THEY'RE TOO BUSY WORRYING ABOUT THEIR PRECIOUS OIL.

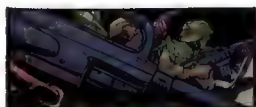
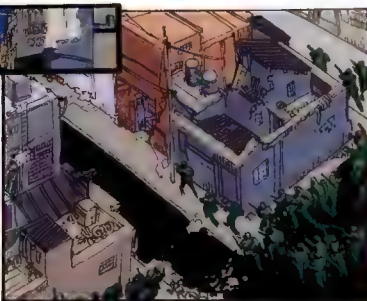
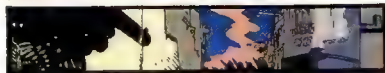
JUST SIT BACK AND RELAX, OLD MAN, EVERYTHING IS UNDER CONTROL.

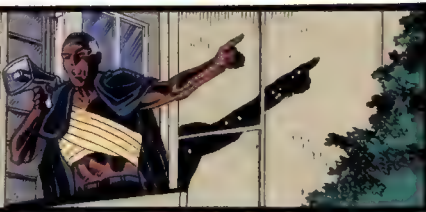
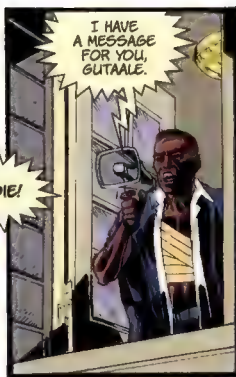














ALI GUTAALE! I AM
PRESIDENT GORANDA
OF IVORY LANA. IN
THE NAME OF THE
UNITED NATIONS, I
ORDER YOU TO
STAND DOWN!



HOW--

NO!



GUN THEM
DOWN! AND
BRING ME
GORANDA'S
HEAD!



MEN OF
UGANDA! ALL OF
YOU CAME HERE
CHASING A
DREAM.

BUT, ARE YOUR
LIVES WORTH SO
LITTLE THAT YOU
WOULD FOLLOW
THIS MAN INTO THE
GRAVE THIS DAY?



WOULD YOU NOT
RATHER RETURN
HOME, SAFELY, AND
LIVE OUT YOUR
LIVES WITH YOUR
LOVED ONES?



HAVE YOU
NO SONS, NO
DAUGHTERS, NO
WIVES WHO ARE
DESPERATELY
WAITING FOR YOU
TO COME HOME?



MEN OF UGANDA. HAVE YOU NOT SEEN ENOUGH BLOODSHED? AND FOR WHAT? TO ACHIEVE PEACE? THAT PEACE YOU SEEK IS RIGHT HERE, RIGHT NOW.



TODAY CAN BE THE DAWN OF A NEW DAY FOR YOU AND ALL OF OUR PEOPLE.

YOU HAVE WON YOUR FREEDOM! NOW ALL THAT IT REQUIRES IS FOR YOU TO PUT DOWN YOUR WEAPONS AND EMBRACE IT.



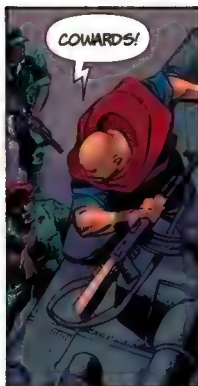
THE YOKE OF OPPRESSION HAS BEEN REMOVED FROM YOUR LIVES. DON'T THROW AWAY YOUR DREAMS FOR THE WILL OF ANOTHER MADMAN!



NO! DO NOT BE TAKEN IN BY HIS LIES!



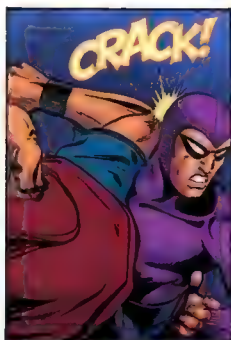
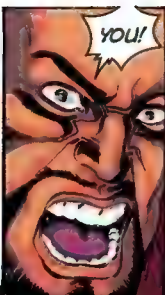
PICK UP YOUR WEAPONS!

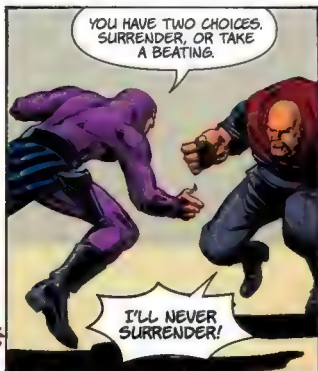
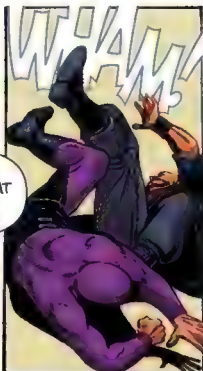


COWARDS!



MISERABLE COWARDS! I'LL SHOW YOU HOW TO ACHIEVE FREEDO--







IT SEEMS
I OWE YOU
AGAIN, MY
FRIEND.



BUT I HAVE TO ASK,
HOW DID YOU KNOW
TO COME TO OUR
AIDE?



A VOICE
FROM THE PAST
SUMMONED
ME.



THANK YOU, PHANTOM.
IT SEEMS I NOT ONLY
OWE YOU MY LIFE, BUT
THE LIVES OF ALL MY
COUNTRYMEN.



WE'RE NOT OUT
OF THE WOODS YET,
MR. PRESIDENT.



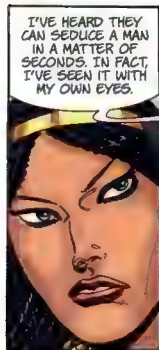
YOU CAN TELL US WHERE
ORTEGA AND THE LADIES TOOK
DIANA, OR WE CAN TOSS YOU IN
A CELL FOR LIFE. YOUR CHOICE.



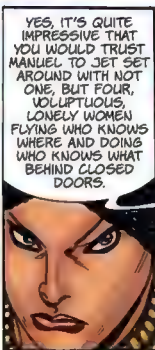
YOU HAVE NO
AUTHORITY OVER
ME, MASKED MAN.
I'LL TELL YOU
NOTHING.



I'M ENCOURAGED BY YOUR STRENGTH. NOT MANY WOMEN WOULD TRUST THEIR LOVERS WITH THE LIKES OF THE SKY BAND.



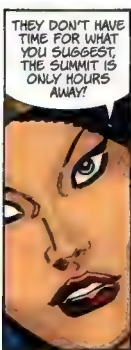
I'VE HEARD THEY CAN SEDUCE A MAN IN A MATTER OF SECONDS. IN FACT, I'VE SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES.



YES, IT'S QUITE IMPRESSIVE THAT YOU WOULD TRUST MANUEL TO JET SET AROUND WITH NOT ONE, BUT FOUR, VOLUPTUOUS, LONELY WOMEN FLYING WHO KNOWS WHERE AND DOING WHO KNOWS WHAT BEHIND CLOSED DOORS.



I BET YOU YOURSELF DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE THEY'RE GOING. SURE, HE MAY HAVE TOLD YOU, BUT EVIL MEN LIE...



THEY DON'T HAVE TIME FOR WHAT YOU SUGGEST, THE SUMMIT IS ONLY HOURS AWAY!



THANKS, ANNA - I KNEW YOU COULDN'T KEEP A SECRET.

GENTLEMAN, IT LOOKS LIKE ALEXANDRIA IS THE TARGET.

NO! THAT'S NOT WHERE THEY ARE!

TOO LATE, NOW, "YOUR HIGHNESS", YOU'VE ALREADY LET THE CAT OUT OF THE BAG.



BEFORE WE CAN DEAL WITH THAT, WE MUST TREAT THE CITIZENS STILL AFFECTED BY THE MANIC. THEN, WE CAN MOVE ON ORTEGA AND HIS MASTERS.

GIVE ME TWO PLANES AND I'LL KILL THREE BIRDS WITH ONE STONE.



...FLY LOW OVER THE CITY AND EMPTY THE TANKS AS CLOSE TO GROUND LEVEL AS POSSIBLE.



THAT SHOULD TAKE CARE OF THOSE IN MAWITAAN, PHANTOM.



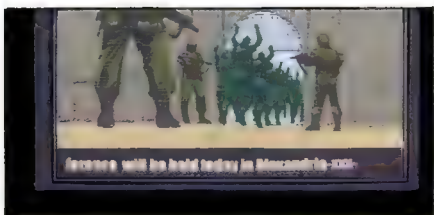
GODSPEED.

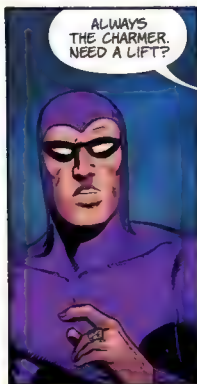


THIS WILL AIDE YOU IN COMPLETING YOUR PART OF THE TASK.



I'M GOING TO NEED SOMETHING FASTER THAN THAT.





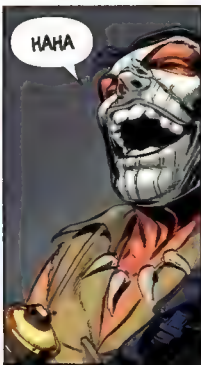


IT IS TRULY EXEMPLARY THAT YOU WOULD THROW YOUR PROVISION BEHIND THE PRIVATE SECTOR, MISS PALMER-WALKER.

I COMMEND YOU FOR YOUR FORWARD THINKING.



HAHA



HER THINKING IS NEITHER FORWARD OR BACKWARD AT THE MOMENT...

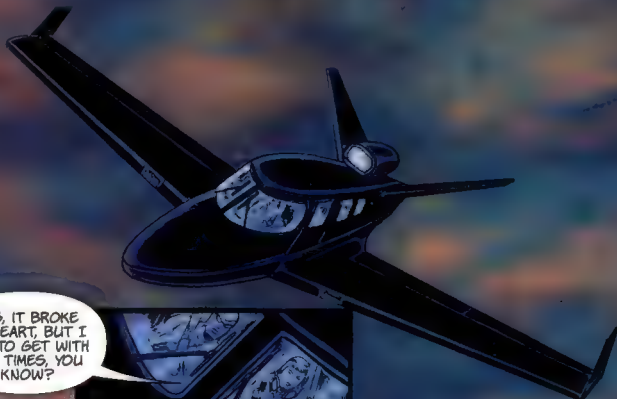


RIGHT NOW, THE ONLY THOUGHTS IN HER PRETTY LITTLE HEAD--



ARE THE ONES I GIVE HER.

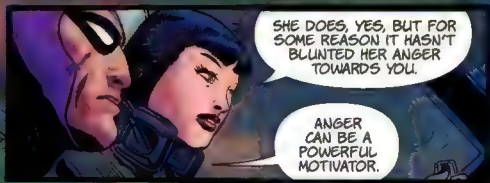




YES, IT BROKE
MY HEART, BUT I
HAD TO GET WITH
THE TIMES, YOU
KNOW?



ENOUGH ABOUT THE
NEW PLANE, I THOUGHT
YOU TOLD ME SARA
KNEW I WASN'T HER
FATHER NOW...



SHE DOES, YES, BUT FOR
SOME REASON IT HASN'T
BLUNTED HER ANGER
TOWARDS YOU.

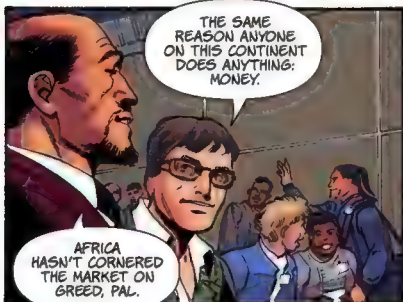
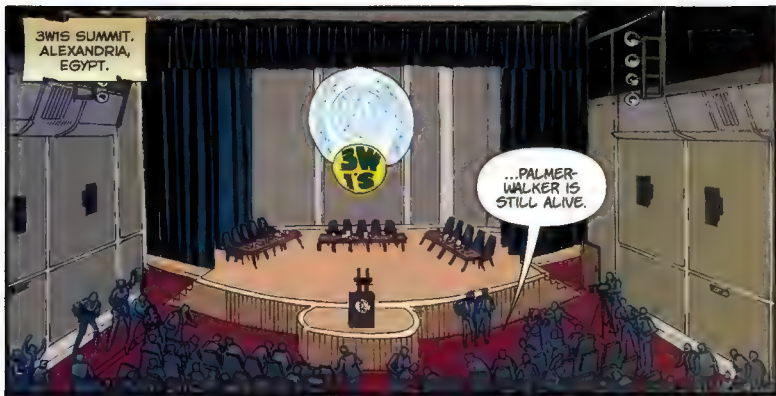
ANGER
CAN BE A
POWERFUL
MOTIVATOR.

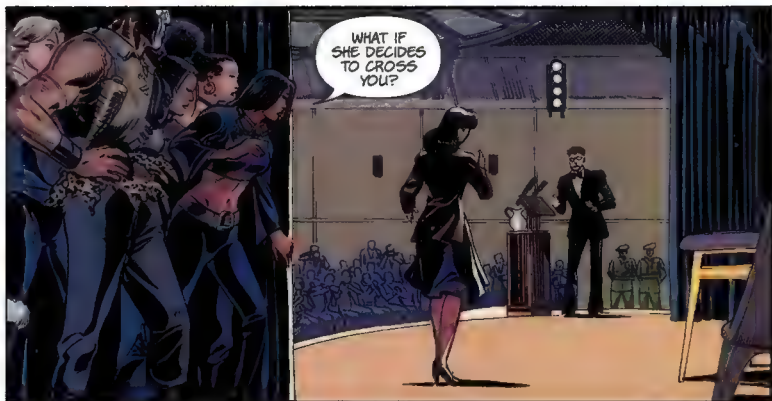


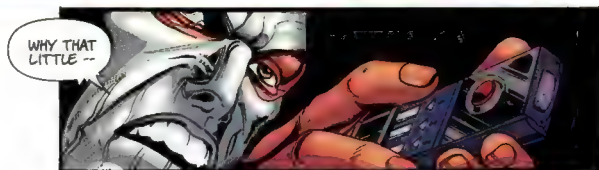
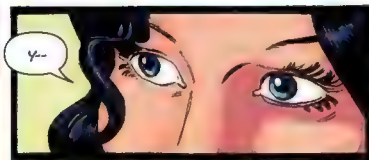
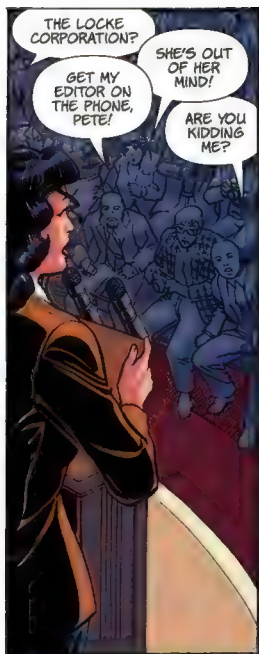
WELL, GREED
SEEMS TO BE HER
MOTIVATION THESE
DAYS. BUT THE MONEY
IS ALL THE SWEETER
IF SHE EARNS IT AT
THE EXPENSE OF A
CERTAIN JUNGLE
LEGEND.



OR HIS
WIFE...

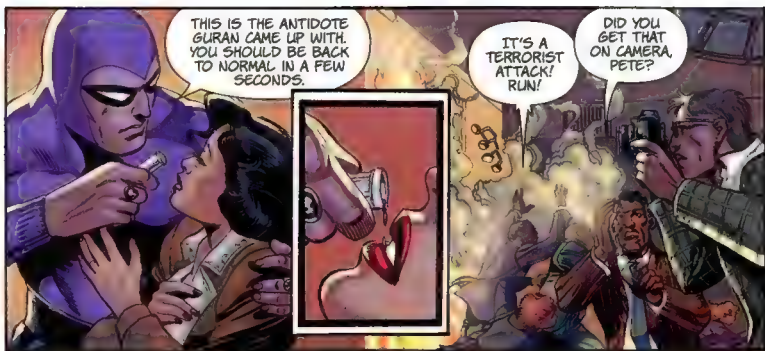


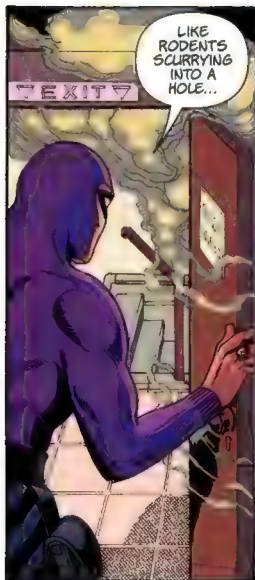
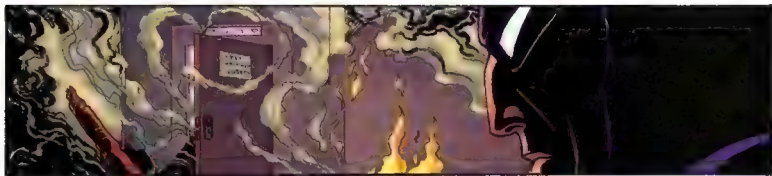






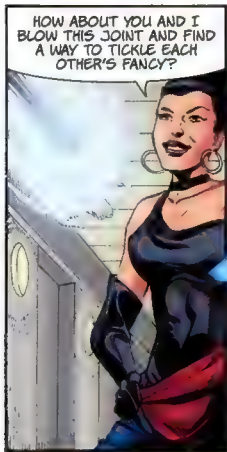
WA-BA-BOOOOM!!



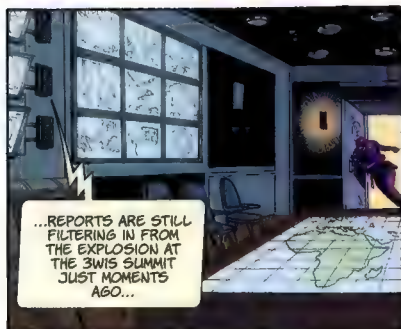


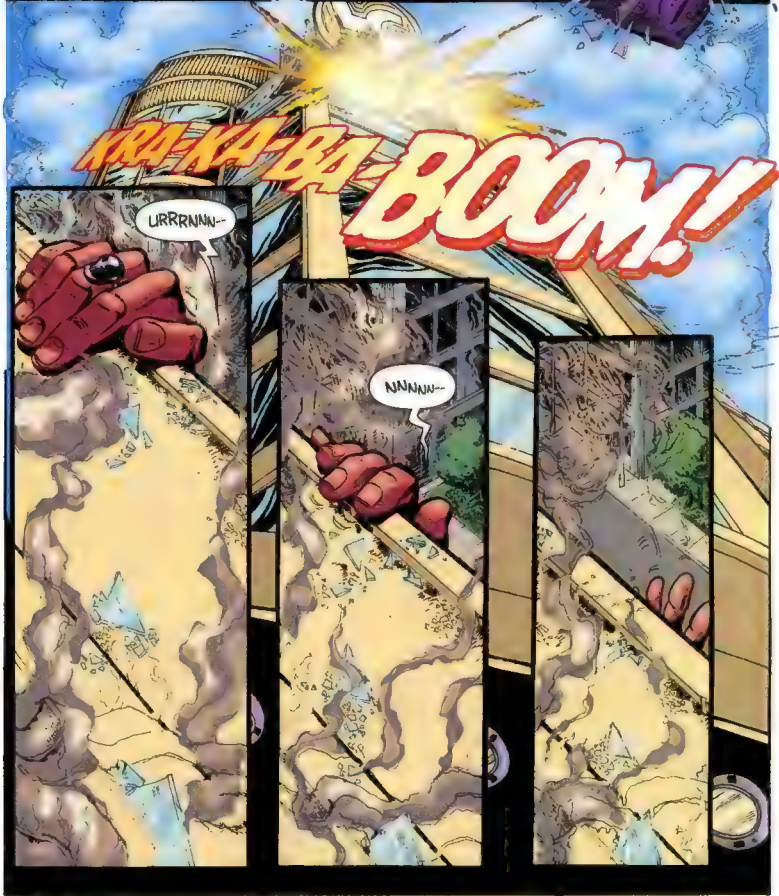
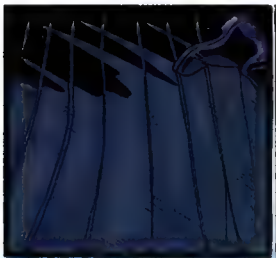


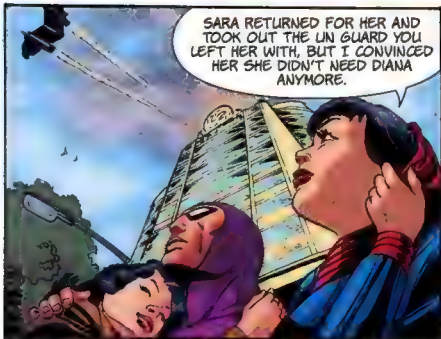
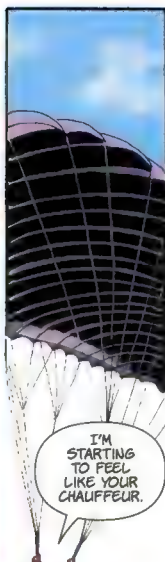
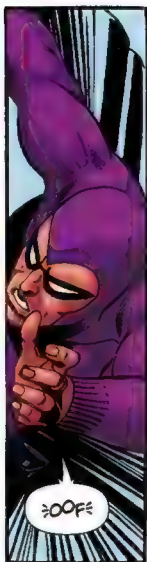


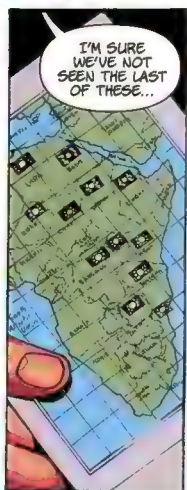


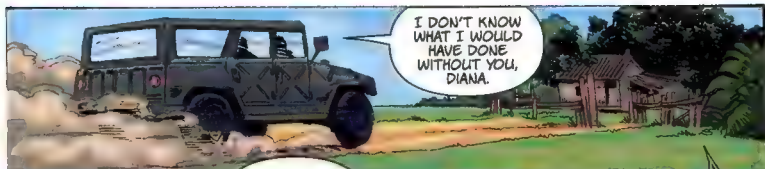












"I GUESS SHE'S JUST ALWAYS IN THE RIGHT PLACE—"



"AT THE RIGHT TIME."



THE END.

Comic Collector Live Fact # 1

The Phantom

72 Years of Protecting the Jungle

5 Years Published by Moonstone



1 Comic Software

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BEHIND THE MASK

By Ed Rhoades

THE FIGHTING PHANTOM

I've been looking for a copy of the Joe Louis/Tony Galento fight, it might turn up on some old boxing special or maybe it will be on a collection of historical pugilistic events offered on a DVD "This offer won't last...call now." If I ever get my hands on it, I'll be using the freeze and enlarge frame tool to examine the angles that show the audience because...Lee Falk was a boxing fan, and he told me he was ringside at that fight with his dog on his lap.

Lee and I would talk about old fighters and younger ones. When the Tyson/Buster Douglas upset took place Lee had missed it, so at his request, I mailed him a copy of the fight. That was one of the odd times that he would call. He wanted to thank me and discuss the fight a bit.

My take on it was that Tyson underestimated the importance of team and training. He wasn't coming in behind jabs bobbing his head like he did in those early days. It seemed like by the time Douglas got to him, he was leading with his chin hoping to punch harder than anyone else. Everyone was so afraid of Tyson. Knowing how he can hit and seeing the devastation his power caused regularly, had to influence his opponents' expectations. Like The Phantom, Tyson instilled great fear into his opponents introducing a powerful variable into the equation.

Another great fighter that older fans talk about is Roberto Duran, the hardy pugilist from Panama. They called him 'Manos de Piedra' which means 'Hands of Stone.' Once he hit you, you suddenly acquired a new respect for his power and made a vow to yourself to try and not get hit again. That's the kind of person Lee Falk portrayed as The Phantom... one for whom it seems has 'hands of stone.' His threatening countenance made opponents more than a little edgy..

Lee told me he felt the Phantom should be portrayed as "...a big guy who could take a few guys out, like a professional football player. He should be about 200 lbs." Professional players and fighters are heavier now than in the time Lee was fleshing out details about The Phantom.

As a result of Lee's interests, in his stories, The Phantom knocked out the current Heavyweight Champion in the Lee Falk/Wilson McCoy Sunday, "The Childhood of the Phantom." (June 21, 1950-January 3, 1960)

Before that, The Phantom fought for the title as "The Masked Marvel." (Nov.1,1948-Feb. 19, 1948) while boxing to raise money for charity.

He also took part in "The Wrestling Tournaments" 13 Sep 1954 18 Dec 1954 In these early days wrestling was a much more respected sport. The entertainment factor of today's matches hadn't completely surfaced yet. In the early times of the strip, The Phantom accepted an annual wrestling challenge for his leadership. A great athlete would be selected to wrestle with The Phantom.

In an earlier Sunday Story 'Castle in the Clouds,' Oct 18, 1942 – April 18, 1943) The Phantom gets a chance at hand to hand combat with a powerful old king that had captured and tormented him. At the end, there is an elaborate wrestling scene, but the Phantom's knock out punch made the difference.

Perhaps as a response to the growing popularity of Judo with its use of strangleholds, the Phantom often grabbed the opponent's throat. The Phantom also employs other tough guy tactics, like smashing two of the villain's heads together. However, the weapon of choice for the hero was most often a simple haymaker.

There was another Lee Falk/Wilson McCoy story 'The Heavyweight Champion," (Nov 19, 1956 – Jan 12, 1957) in which Diana wears a costume like The Phantom and these are considered part of their fencing outfits. In the course of this story, the Phantom finds himself fighting the champion again.

In more modern times, The Phantom has been described as a master of martial arts as well. In fact, in 'The Runt' or "The Fourth Son," (Aug 18, 1991- May 17, 1992) The Phantom was shown teaching his sons all sorts of styles of fighting from swords to bare hands. Under the tenure of Sy Barry, The Phantom's use of martial arts became more sophisticated.

Australian Frew publisher, Jim Shepherd was also a friend of Lee's and presumably at some time, they discussed boxing. Shepherd wrote a Phantom boxing story called "Rumble in the Jungle." With a background in sports writing, he put together an interesting tale with The Phantom facing a fearsome champion resembling Mike Tyson.

There is a very effective modern branch of Jujitsu, where most of the blocking is done with the left hand. (You wouldn't want to smack a bad guy and accidentally give him a good mark.) Moonstone artist, Pat Quinn, addressed the issue of the Phantom's training suggesting a martial arts position where the right hand covers the left. Pat explained, "The left hand doesn't punch knuckle first. Instead, the left hand favors different striking methods."

The combination of strength and timing necessary to deliver a knockout blow is referred to as ki in some martial art disciplines. It's an efficiency of movement The Phantom demonstrates repeatedly.

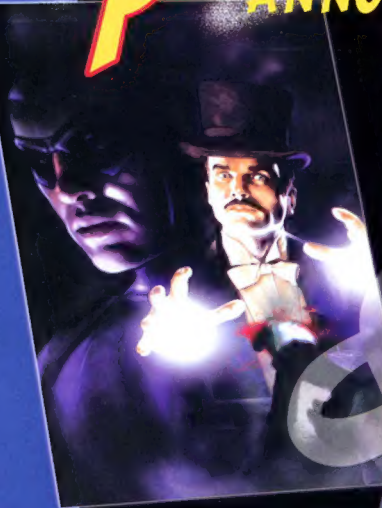
His personal interests and natural curiosity as well as his sense of theatre enriched Lee's characters. One can't help but wonder if in a Phantom adventure, Lee was describing what he saw from ringside when Joe Louis knocked out the colorful "Two Ton Tony"

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